

Assessing Open Government Data Quality in Africa: Part I – Population and Census Data

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SUMMARY

Reliable population and census data are fundamental to evidence-based policymaking, urban planning, and sustainable development. However, significant disparities persist in the qualities of these datasets, particularly in Africa. This study evaluates the quality of publicly available population and census data in eight African countries using a structured assessment framework that integrates key dimensions of data quality, including availability, accessibility, disaggregation, documentation, and timeliness. The study adopts a comparative approach, combining systematic data extraction, standardized scoring criteria, and descriptive statistical analysis. The results reveal substantial variation in data quality across countries, with widespread limitations in disaggregation, accessibility, and documentation. These gaps constrain the usability of population and census data for planning and policy implementation. By providing a replicable framework for assessing population and census data quality, this study contributes to ongoing efforts to strengthen open government data ecosystems in Africa. Enhancing the quality of open government data is essential for informed decision-making and sustainable development.

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